

CLEAN VERSION OF AMENDED SPECIFICATION

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Current utilization of computers as part of the learning environment includes the use of tutorial-style programs to teach a wide array of skills. With the advent of educational web sites, "distance learning" is now possible through educational programs available at certain web sites. Once such Web site is Learn.com, owned by the assignee of this application. At the Learn.com Web site, a user may log on and select from among a variety of free educational programs to learn a certain skill or subject.

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Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

One embodiment of the present invention provides a method and tool for annotating computer-based documents. Such documents may include, but are not limited to, spreadsheet documents, documents generated by word processor programs, such as WORDPERFECT or MICROSOFT WORD, Internet documents such as Web pages or portions of Web pages, or any other suitable computer compatible or computer-based document. Such document may include text-based information, graphical information, or video information, or a combination thereof.

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pages. A Web site proprietor and the course author may share advertising revenue generated by that course, for example, on 70% to 30% basis, respectively.

In order to motivate authors to create

5 courses, it is generally desirable to make this process and the method of compensation as simple and efficient as possible. FIG. 7 shows the Learn.com home page that includes a "Write a Course" utility that helps authors generate and submit instructional courses for Internet
10 publication. As shown in FIG. 7, an author may choose either a "Write a Course" link 32 or a "Teach" menu option 34 to begin writing a course. At this point the author may be presented with legal documents such as an "Author's Agreement" and a "Terms and Conditions for
15 Use" contract that define the business relationship and publication rights of the author and the Web site proprietor (not shown).

Once the author has read and agreed to these Terms, he or she may begin writing a course by clicking
20 On "go" button 36 shown on the bottom of FIG. 8. This may invoke an "Add Course Wizard" program that may prompt the author to name and describe the course, pick a category for the course, and decide who will have access to the final course document. For example,
25 Course Wizard program 38 (FIG. 9) may provide a screen, such as Screen 40, (FIG. 10) that includes a data entry field 42 in which the author may enter a suggested course name. Course Wizard program 38 may also provide a screen 44 (FIG. 11) with a data entry field 45 so that

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the author may enter a suggested course category. Any course may be password protected for privacy, if desired, (FIG. 12) by entering a password in a data entry field 47 of password screen 46. Such protection
5 may prevent unauthorized access to the course by persons other than the author (or persons permitted by the author).

Next, Course Wizard program 38 may automatically install a small editing control program
10 on the author's computer so that downloading the entire utility program is not required. Once all the information requested in FIGS. 9-12 is entered to the user's satisfaction, he or she may select a "Finish" button 50 (FIG. 13) that may create a course template and places
15 the user in an "Edit Mode" screen 52 (FIG. 14). The author may now enter and edit course content into a text box using only a Web browser and the provided editing controls. When the author is satisfied with the course format and content, he or she may exit the
20 course and submit it for review by the Web site's editorial staff. This may be done by selecting a "Submit the Course" link 54 shown in the top center portion of FIG. 15.

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